Womencrafts

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For Immediate Release

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**Iconic Provincetown Shop Reopens with New Owner**

*May 4, 2015*- Womencrafts, Provincetown’s iconic feminist bookstore, has a new owner—and in the coming years, will boast new product lines and events, and outreach to new audiences. Kathryn Livelli, the proprietor for the past 16 years, has sold the book and crafts store to staffer Michelle Axelson.

Lesbian owned and operated since 1976, with a mission to promote the work of female artisans, authors, and musicians, Womencrafts is one of the oldest shops in Provincetown. It is also one of the [twelve remaining feminist bookstores](http://mic.com/articles/90515/these-are-the-last-of-america-s-dying-feminist-bookstores) in the country—others are in Chicago, Atlanta, and New York—down from 120 women’s bookstores in the 1990s. The shop currently showcases over 100 women artists, many times that number of authors, and finds its mission as politically and culturally necessary today as it was when in first opened.

Michelle Axelson, 37, views herself as among a generation of feminists who have benefited by the work of their pioneering elders. “My journey as a women and as a lesbian has been made easier by institutions like Womencrafts and women like Kathryn Livelli. I am inspired by the shop’s history and excited to keep it dynamic and relevant for generations to come.” Livelli will mentor Axelson and will keep an active presence in the shop.

Like many outer Cape residents, Axelson came to Provincetown to take a break from city life. A four-month visit turned into five years as she grew to love the beauty, culture, and healing benefits of coastal living in this small town at the tip of Cape Cod. She volunteers at the AIDS Support Group of Cape Cod and the Soup Kitchen in Provincetown, along with her work at Womencrafts.

Perusing Womencrafts’ Facebook page on any given day reads like an exchange of love letters between the shop and loyal customers. “Sometimes just walking into your shop can make me want to cry,” posts visitor Pat Beaudoin to the page. “I have been coming to your shop since I was in my 20s, and am now in my 50s. Every trip I make to Ptown is an opportunity to breathe the air in Womencrafts. It is like a home where you are truly accepted and celebrated for who you are.”

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Photo: Kathryn Livelli (left) and Michelle Axelson (right)

Photo credit: Tina Camino

